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TAGS: [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [SCUL](#) [UNESCO](#) [TH](#)

SUBJECT: THAILAND EXPECTS TO RATIFY UNESCO CONVENTION, BUT NOT
SOON

REF: SECSTATE 196185

¶1. On December 20, Econoff met with Ms. Angsana Sihapitak, Director of the Development Affairs Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the office with responsibility for UNESCO issues, and provided talking points on the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Expressions as per reftel.

¶2. Ms. Angsana predicted that Thailand would eventually ratify the Convention but believed it would "not happen anytime soon." Angsana explained that the Ministry of Cultural Affairs had the lead on ratification of the Convention, but would first need to circulate the Convention to other ministries to ensure there was no conflict with existing laws and agreements. From there it would require Cabinet approval and later parliamentary approval. Since there was "no emergency" driving the ratification process Angsana considered the process could take as long as a few years, but cautioned that there were always exceptions and Thailand could ratify much earlier. In the meantime, the RTG would observe the implementation of the Convention in other countries and any effect it may have on trade.

¶3. Angsana had no objection to the inclusion of a written understanding with the ratification instrument as suggested in reftel, and noted that Thailand had included a similar statement with their 2005 vote to adopt the Convention. However, she said that the ratification process had not advanced far and little consideration had been given thus far to including such a statement.

¶4. Angsana said that the RTG was interested in the responses of the other seven countries who submitted similar statements on the Convention in 2005 as listed in reftel. Any information that could be shared with the RTG would be appreciated. Angsana also suggested a WTO group be established to monitor the Convention's effect on trade and its consistency with WTO agreements.

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